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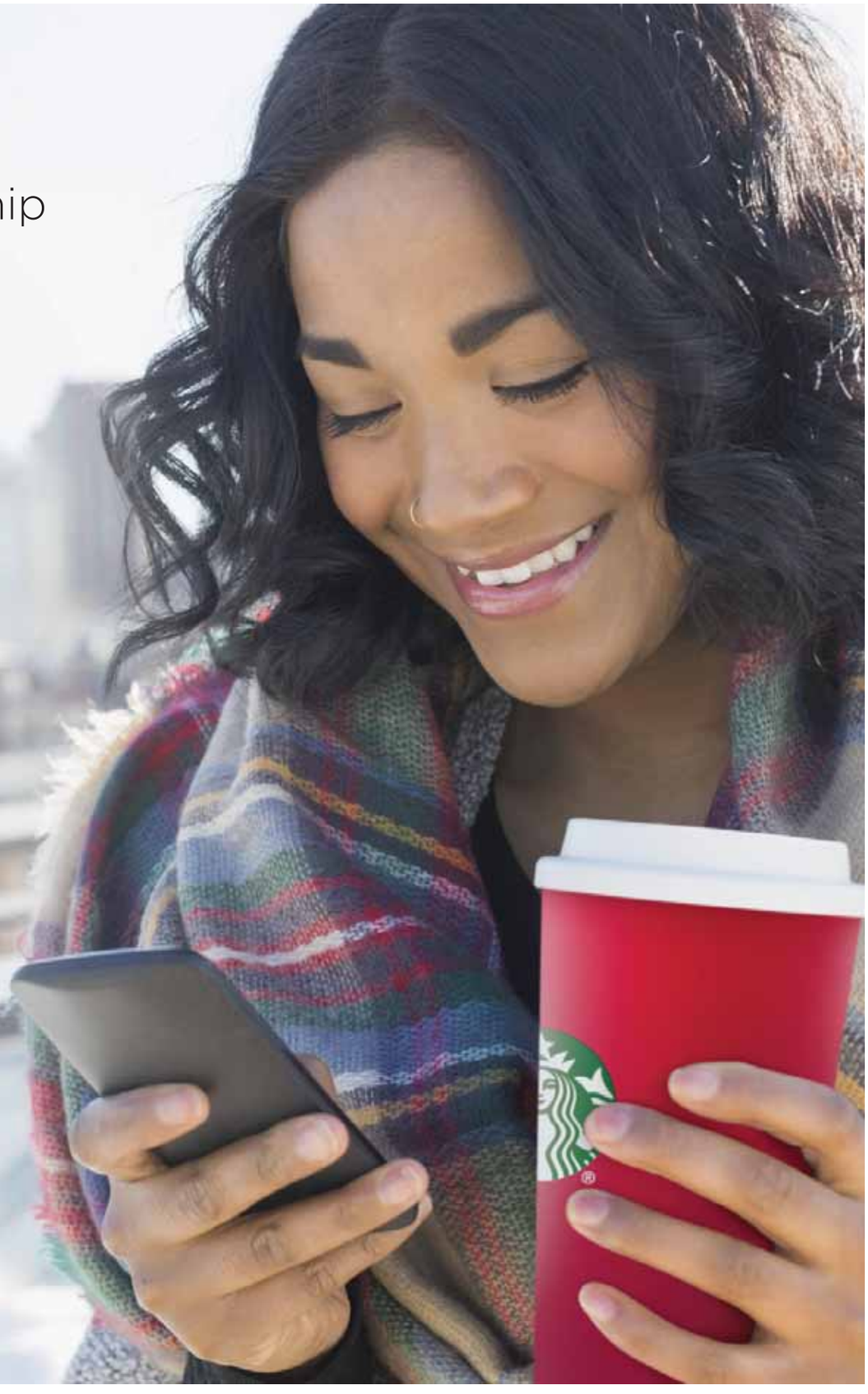

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76
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Eastside suffering 'mental health crisis'

RESEARCH

Targeted help is required, study finds

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

A new study on prolific Downtown Eastside criminal offenders is proof of a mental health crisis in the neighbourhood, according to a Simon Fraser University researcher.

Health sciences researcher Julian Somers and his team accessed the anonymous case files, social and health services records of 14,000 people sentenced at Vancouver provincial court between 2003 and 2012.

Of the 323 individuals deemed "very high frequency service users," 99 per cent were diagnosed with at least one mental disorder and 80 per cent also had a substance abuse problem.

The study, published Monday, comes seven years after Vancouver police published its Lost in Transition report warning of a mental health crisis in the Downtown Eastside and outlining how a lack of mental health treatment services has made police officers the first point of contact for many residents suffering from mental illness.

"(The new data shows) the perceptions of the police and the mayor at the time were quite accurate that there is a mental health crisis and people are getting stuck in a revolving door," Somers told Metro.

The study found that over a five-year period, 216 high-frequency service users who received community sentences averaged $168,000 in public service costs while accessing health, social welfare and justice services.

The 107 high frequency service users sentenced to a spell in custody racked up an average of $247,000 in public service costs during the same time frame.

Somers believes his study can help service providers help those individuals more effectively.

"We're trying to shine a light on this segment. One of the benefits of this type of research is it highlights the characteristic of these people," he said. "So if it's schizophrenia we're seeing in a large percentage, it leads to a much more specialized (treatment) model."

> **"It's really about what kind of society we want to have."**
> Julian Somers

Somers said effective treatment and outreach already exist in the form of Vancouver Coastal Health's Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams.

Once a patient has secure housing, the teams visit with patients proactively and help them transition from a "chaotic lifestyle" to stability, allowing them to get their life back on track through employment or education programs.

In some cases, however, the process can take years. The study concludes that kind of targeted support is required in order "to produce positive outcomes and prevent the perpetuation of a costly and ineffective revolving door."

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Bill Cosby sues model Beverly Johnson over claims comedian drugged her in 1980s.

Condo owners the focus of energy reduction plan

URBAN PLANNING

City wants consultant to retrofit old buildings

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

Vancouver's plan to shift to 100 per cent renewable energy use by 2050 will hinge on its ability to convince condo owners to spring for energy-saving renovations.

But the city needs some help persuading strata councils to first pay attention to greenhouse gas emissions and then that it's worth the price tag to try to reduce energy use.

The City of Vancouver wants to hire a consultant to help it determine the most effective energy retrofit measures for multi-unit residential buildings, create a business case for the upgrades and engage with strata corporations to see what's stopping them from reducing energy use.

The consultant's recommendations will help form region-wide Metro Vancouver Strata Energy Advisor program, a resource for condo owners looking to cut down on their energy emissions.

A view of the Vancouver skyline in late winter, from Andy Livingstone Park.
ERIC DREGER/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Many of the more than 5,500 strata corporations in Metro Vancouver are older than 20 years old, according to the request for consulting services. Since many need major repairs to their building envelopes, the city argues owners might as well make deep energy retrofits at the same time. (Plus, it's cheaper to do so simultaneously.)

But it's challenging to convince stratas to act due to the "lengthy and often contentious" decision-making process among condo owners and a lack of accessible information on the cost of undertaking energy retrofits, according to the report. The city states it can take up to three years for strata councils to make major renovation decisions.

5,500

There are more than 5,500 strata corporations in Vancouver. Many of them are more than 20 years old.

2050

The city wants to switch to 100 per cent renewable energy use by 2050.

The consultant will look into possible financial incentives to make energy upgrades possible for stratas that otherwise can't afford to or aren't willing to foot the bill.

The city has also asked the consultant to recommend local or senior government regulations that could make retrofits mandatory in the absence of voluntary upgrades.

On top of the larger building upgrades, the consultant will also look into measures condos owners can take in their own suites, be it installing low-flow showerheads or getting rid of decorative fireplaces, which are apparently a major source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Condominium Home Owners Association is also working on province-wide outreach and education on energy retrofits.

AGRICULTURE INNOVATION

16 food projects funded

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

A local company which strives to create the perfect sticky quinoa for sushi is one of 16 food projects awarded government funding.

The province announced $900,000 in agriculture innovation funding on Monday through a joint federal-provincial agreement designed to boost innovation and competitiveness in the industry.

"For a local food producer ... it gives you that extra push.
Blair Bullus

The wide-ranging list of projects selected to received money from the Canada-B.C. Agri-Innovation Fund include efforts to develop a cloud-based food safety program and demonstrating how recapturing and reusing water can reduce water waste by up to 80 per cent.

Top Tier's owner, Blair Bullus, told Metro he's not ready to spill the beans on his secret products but praised the assistance provided by government.

"For a local food producer like me, I've been able to keep the company moving forward and keep a long-term outlook [with the financial support]," said Bullus. "It gives you that extra push."

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Airport faces busiest day

TRAVEL

Official offers tips to keep holiday flights free of stress

Tereza Verenca
Metro | Vancouver

Vancouver International Airport will experience its busiest day of the year on Tuesday, with a whopping 68,000 travellers expected to pass through its gates.

That number will put YVR on track for a record year, according to director of customer care Reg Krake, who said the airport's twenty-millionth passenger is expected any day this week. Last year, 19.3 million people came through YVR.

"We can point to a few different trends," Krake said of the increase. "We have several flights from Asia coming in that are higher than last year. A lot of U.S. travellers are coming up, and lots of new routes have entered the market."

While not unusual around the holidays, he added, more and more airlines are seeing a higher "load factor," meaning flights are fully booked, and rather than adding extra flights to existing routes, some companies have been adding larger aircraft to their fleets.

To ensure everyone's travel experience this week is stress-free, Krake has a few tips. First, travellers are encouraged to check the weather — both locally and at their destination — for possible delays. Second, when packing, leave gifts unwrapped.

"If there is anything that the security screening agency needs to see, whether in your carry-on luggage or baggage, it is subject to screening. It's always unhappy if it gets unwrapped, but that's just making us all safe and secure."

For any last-minute buys at the airport, free gift-wrapping is being offered.

Downloading the YVR airport app is another way to speed things along, Krake said.

"You can turn and rotate the map in 3D so you can kind of see perspective ... and figure out where you're going. We map you right to your gate," he explained.

And as always, arrive early.

Thousands of passengers will flood YVR on Tuesday, the busiest day of the year for the airport. COURTESY YVR

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Crew aids fifth skier of month

Venturing out-of-bounds into avalanche-prone terrain is simply not worth it.

That's the message from North Shore Rescue (NSR), which completed its fifth rescue of the month on Sunday, recovering a skier off of Cypress Mountain.

A 42-year-old man from Vancouver called his wife around 1:30 p.m. to say he was lost, according to NSR team leader Mike Danks.

"They spoke again at 3:30 p.m. and he said he was about half an hour of being out. The cell reception was really dodgy," Danks said.

The rescue team was then called in around 7 p.m., and the man was located nearly five hours later.

Crews found him at the bottom of a gully inside an NSR cache, which holds emergency supplies for lost or injured people. He had used the extra blankets to keep warm.

"He was very lucky because we did have some significant avalanches released in that gully," said Danks. TEREZA VERENCA/METRO

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TRANSLINK

Vancouver firm's app tracks concussions

TECHNOLOGY

HeadCheck Health system can be used on the sidelines

Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

Harrison Brown has particular interest in Concussion, the movie that portrays Dr. Bennet Omalu and his battle with the National Football League after exposing the connection between chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) and repeated head trauma in football players.

The movie, which features Will Smith as Dr. Omalu, is in local theatres beginning Christmas Day.

"It's good to have people aware that this actually happened but whether the details are true … I suspect they'll downplay how bad the NFL was," said Brown, a PhD student at the University of British Columbia and co-founder of the Vancouver-based company HeadCheck Health.

HeadCheck launched a new app designed to allow sports team's medical personnel to perform concussion assessments on the sidelines or bench before deciding whether or not an athlete is ready to resume playing after taking a hit to the head.

"What we want to do is provide athletic trainers and other team medical staff with an opportunity to perform accurate and reliable concussion assessments," said Brown.

Brown said there are three components of a concussion assessment: A symptom questionnaire, a neurocognitive test and finally a balance test.

"Balance is … the only one that can't really be cheated," said Brown.

> **I suspect they'll downplay how bad the NFL was.**
> Harrison Brown, on the movie Concussion

Under the previous form of a balance test, the trainer would stand in front of the athlete and ask them to perform certain balancing acts.

The trainer then would look to see if the athlete made errors, said Brown.

With the HeadCheck app, athletes are asked to perform a balance test, as part of a concussion assessment. They would wear a headband containing a small sensor that is wirelessly connected to the app.

"It collects data during the balance test and then it's run through an algorithm, which gives them a much more accurate score."

HeadCheck's new app shows results from a balance test, as part of a concussion assessment. COURTESY HEADCHECK HEALTH

CONSERVATION

Jabba, Luke, Yoda: Pups have B.C. roots

Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

The force is strong with the marmots – 14 endangered Vancouver Island marmot pups were born at the Calgary Zoo during this year's breeding season, named for popular characters from a galaxy far, far away.

"We had a Luke, Leia, Han Solo, Chewbacca – and of course, our chubbiest one we call Jabba," said senior veterinarian Dr. Doug Whiteside.

The species is endangered and considered one of the rarest mammals in the world.

The zoo has been breeding marmots since 1998, when the number of Vancouver Island marmots fell below 30. Since then, they've produced 142 pups. Combined with efforts from the Toronto Zoo, there are over 300 marmots back on the island.

"This has been an excellent year for us with a healthy population of new pups that will bolster the wild population," said Whiteside.

"They're very, very cute. They're about the size of a house cat – a chunky house cat."

14 new marmots born at the Calgary Zoo should boost the endangered population on Vancouver Island. CALGARY ZOO

Four females and 10 males were born, from four litters. 13 of the 14 are tentatively scheduled for release in the wild next year, to help increase marmot populations.

Whiteside said the exact reason why the marmots became endangered is still unknown, but speculated it might have had something to do with logging activity in the area. Logging created meadows for the marmots to run around in – but also made it easier for predators to snatch them.

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Charity gets OK on housing

FOSTER CHILDREN

SOS Children's Village can build five new units for youth

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

After a year of grim headlines for British Columbian foster children, a charity that helps homeless youth was delivered some good news just in time for the holidays.

SOS Children's Village B.C. finally received building permits from the City of Surrey for five basement suites that will house youth aging out of foster care, the organization announced this week.

"We've been jumping hurdles for about a year and a half, it's been painful," executive director Douglas Dunn said Monday, as he prepared to sign a contract with a contractor who promises to start work on Jan. 4. "We are just so excited."

The charity relies on donations, not government funding, and has raised $210,000 since June 2014 — enough to start work on three suites in the homes it already owns.

That may not seem like a lot, but Dunn said the five suites will have a large impact in Surrey where between 70 and 80 youth are living on the streets at any given time.

"We know we will never address all of it, but when all five suites up and running, that should be able to reduce the homeless population by eight per cent," Dunn said.

> **We've been jumping hurdles for about a year and a half, it's been painful.**
> Douglas Dunn

SOS B.C. aims to provide adult caregivers, counselling and a cluster of homes for youth in order to give them a sense of community and commonality.

Its village, as it calls it, currently has 12 homes and an assortment of programming from sports and recreation to life skills coaching on grocery shopping or budgeting.

"We give youth a strong sense of community. With these transition suites, it's not just a space," Dunn said. If youth agree to participate in at least one year of programming (and to keep booze and cigarettes out of the village), they can land a spot in one of the units.

Throughout the year, they work to own everything in the unit so when they are ready to leave — Dunn emphasized they never age out because "19 is just a birthday" — they have all the furnishings necessary for their own apartments.

When youth move from the village, it tends to be the first time they've moved on their own accord — a huge feat considering foster children are uprooted an average of seven times in their young lives, Dunn said.

SOS B.C. also has a crisis intervention team to help youth on the streets find apartments.

They earn money through a thrift store where they aim to create "apartments in a box" for youth that are struggling to furnish homes for the first time.

A young woman plays the piano at the SOS Children's Village B.C.. The organization now has permits for basement suites to house young people aging out of foster care. CONTRIBUTED

COAST GUARD

No injuries, damage as carrier runs aground

A cargo ship has run aground at the deep-water bulk terminal in Squamish.

A Transportation Safety Board spokesman says no one has been hurt and there doesn't appear to be any damage to the vessel.

Chris Krepski says a safety board team is going to investigate at the terminal, which is 50 kilometres north of Vancouver.

Krepski says the vessel, the Kai Xuan from Korea, apparently ran aground Monday morning.

He says they aren't sure what caused the grounding or what the ship was carrying, but it doesn't appear to pose any danger to the environment.

Dan Bate, with the Canadian Coast Guard, says the guard wasn't called out to respond because there was no concern the incident had caused any pollution.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cheetah not spotted

CONSERVATION

Police call off search for big cat wandering near Highway 3

Conservation officers have called off the search for a cheetah last seen roaming a highway in British Columbia's Interior late last week.

Insp. Joe Caravetta of the Conservation Officer Service said Monday that there have been no reported sightings of the stray cat since it was originally spotted in the Kootenay region last Thursday.

"We haven't found the cheetah. Whether it's at large or not, we can't confirm," he said.

"At this point in time we don't feel there's a present, immediate safety risk to the public."

RCMP sent out a release Thursday evening that the big cat had been seen wandering along Highway 3 near Crawford Bay, about 50 kilometres northeast of Nelson in the Kootenay region.

Creston RCMP released this photo of an adult cheetah that was spotted along Highway 3 last Thursday in the Crawford Bay and Kootenay Bay areas in B.C. CONTRIBUTED/RCMP

The witness who happened upon the cheetah took several pictures of it walking along the gravel shoulder between the highway and a snow-covered field. The witness said the animal was wearing an orange coloured cloth collar.

Officials have spoken to one person of interest since the investigation began, Caravetta added, but didn't elaborate on why they talked with that person.

> **Who brought it, where did they have it and where is it now?**
> Insp. Joe Caravetta

"Obviously somebody brought it here, it didn't just walk from Africa," he said. "So who brought it, where did they have it and where is it now?"

Caravetta also stressed that conservation officers were not interested in killing the animal.

"We will not destroy this cheetah," he said.

"We understand that these animals are threatened and endangered. The last thing we want to do is shoot a cheetah."

Last week the province asked the Calgary Zoo to house the animal, if found, until a more permanent, licensed facility could be located.

Zoo spokeswoman Trish Exton-Parder said the Alberta facility has the proper permits and expertise to care for a cheetah and would be happy to help.

B.C.'s Forests Ministry received a permit application currently under review to possess a cheetah in the Kootenay region, according to a ministry statement.

As for the condition of the missing African cat, Caravetta couldn't say if the animal might have died from exposure in an area where temperatures overnight Thursday reached minus 16.

B.C.'s provincial veterinarian says it would be difficult for a cheetah to survive any length of time in cold weather without food, said Caravetta.

"It doesn't look good for it if somebody hasn't already found it." THE CANADIAN PRESS

B.C. HYDRO

Controversial Site C dam contract set at $1.75 billion

BC Hydro will pay a consortium of three companies about $1.75 billion to build the largest components of the controversial Site C hydroelectric dam.

The Crown corporation announced last month that Peace Hydro Partners was the preferred proponent to build the earthen dam, foundation, two diversion tunnels and spillways in the province's northeast.

It initially estimated the work would cost about $1.5 billion, but announced on Monday it would pay the boosted fee to ACCIONA Infrastructure Canada Inc., Petrowest Corporation and Samsung C&T Canada Ltd.

B.C.'s Opposition New Democrats are criticizing the deal, saying there is no guarantee that British Columbians will get the work. The BC Building Trades Council also says it is shocked, claiming as many as 1,500 jobs may go to workers from Alberta and Saskatchewan. Legal challenges against the dam have been launched by several groups and First Nations. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Spanking law to be revoked

SECTION 43

End in sight for 'reasonable' force against children

The Liberal government plans to repeal a section of the Criminal Code that protects parents — and teachers — who use spanking and other "reasonable" force against children.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has promised to implement all 94 recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that investigated the dark history and ongoing legacy of the Indian residential school system. One of them was to repeal section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

"The commission believes that corporal punishment is a relic of a discredited past and has no place in Canadian schools or homes," the TRC wrote in its final report released last week.

A spokesman for Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould confirmed Monday the federal government includes that recommendation in its overall pledge, but said it is too early to get into other details.

"The government is committed to implementing all of the 94 calls to action. However, at this point, we cannot speculate on potential legislative or policy approaches to address this issue," spokesman Christian Girouard wrote in an email Monday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Corporal punishment is a relic of a discredited past and has no place in Canadian schools or homes.

A statement released by TRC

IRAQ DEFENCE MINISTER KEEPS FOCUS ON TRAINING Canadian Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan writes in the visitors' book before meeting with Iraqi Kurdish leader Massud Barzani on Monday. Sajjan toured the front lines in the war against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, meeting with Kurdish military commanders and Canadian special forces who repelled last week's major offensive west of Irbil. SAFIN HAMED/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

IN BRIEF

Online threats a growing concern for universities

Universities are being urged to put resources into monitoring online threats in light of a spate of incidents at North American institutions that intensified after the fatal mass shooting at an Oregon college in October.

William Taylor, president of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, said many institutions south of the border now hire data-mining services to comb the Internet for concerning posts.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadians injured in Vegas

Two Quebecers remained in a Las Vegas hospital with critical head wounds on Monday after a woman struck them and more than 30 other people with her vehicle on a busy sidewalk along the city's famous casino strip. Sheriff Joe Lombardo said one person died and 35 people were injured after Sunday evening's incident, and he does not believe this was an act of terrorism. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Hans Island has been quietly creating tension between Canada and Denmark since 1973. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

New chance to solve land feud: Expert

ARCTIC

Bid for Canada and Denmark to share island put forward

It's hard to imagine a less likely trigger point between two more unlikely combatants than rocky, chilly, empty Hans Island up near the top of the globe.

But as University of British Columbia political science professor Michael Byers ruefully observes, "wars have been fought in the past over seemingly small things."

He thinks Canada and Denmark will want to avoid such a rotten state of affairs.

What's more, he told Torstar News Service, current political events provide a window — and this season of peace offers a powerful incentive — to melt at least some of the diplomatic iciness in the Arctic.

Hans Island is a 1.2-sq.-km rock in the Kennedy Channel of the Nares Strait between Canada's Ellesmere Island and Denmark's Greenland.

Just before Christmas in 1973, Canada and Denmark agreed to a treaty that established the boundary between Canada and Greenland.

The boundary-makers drew a series of geodesic lines up the middle of the waterway, and all went swimmingly until they bumped into Hans Island. Since their mandate was to draw maritime, not land divisions, they hopped over it.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Canada claimed Hans as Canadian. Denmark assumed it to be Danish. And the two sides have not seen eye to eye on Hans since.

Enter Michael Byers and his Danish colleague, Michael Boss, a professor from Aarhus University.

At a conference at the Danish school in November, the two put forward the Aarhus Declaration — which proposes that the dispute over Hans Island be resolved by creating a "condominium of shared authority."

Byers said he has thought about such a plan for years, but "it didn't seem like something the Harper government would likely seize upon."Recent changes of government in Canada and Denmark offer an opportunity, he said.

The new governments of Canada and Denmark "should both want to send positive signals about Arctic co-operation, about dispute settlement, particularly at a time when there's some significant tension with Russia," Byers said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Wise statesmen and diplomats seek to resolve small problems while they're small.
Michael Byers

MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

Don't raise taxes for pot, warns Economist

As Canada mulls how to handle marijuana legalization — promised in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's election platform — experts are stressing the "Goldilocks point" for taxes: not too low, not too high, but just right.

"They can't raise taxes too much or people will just smoke the illegal stuff," said Timothy Easton, an economist at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, B.C.

"You want to have it high enough to discourage consumption — if, in fact, that's your goal — but if you set it too high you end up with a continuation of the black market," noted Patrick Fafard, associate professor at the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

In the U.S., Colorado and Oregon favour a 25 per cent sales tax on weed. In Alaska, which has legalized the use of marijuana but is still figuring out how to sell it, lawmakers have discussed levying a $50-per-ounce fee.

$1B

Up to $1 billion in savings could be gleaned from the justice system alone, according to Patrick Fafard.

Colorado raked in nearly $73.5 million (U.S.) through the first seven months of 2015, putting the state on pace to collect over $125 million for the year — about $24 per person from its 5.2 million residents.

Transplanting that formula to Ontario, the cash-strapped government would be looking at more than $450 million (Canadian) in tax revenue from its 13 million residents.

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HBC

China's year of disasters

SAFETY REGULATIONS

Four incidents spark outrage, demand for more oversight

China's year of man-made disasters began on New Year's Eve when 36 revelers were killed in a stampede in Shanghai. Four of the incidents in 2015 have prompted the government to pledge to improve industrial oversight and safety regulations:

Chinese Paramilitary police in Shanghai. GETTY IMAGES

Rescuers search for survivors in the Yangtze River. GETTY IMAGES

Fire and smoke rises after explosions in Tianjin. GETTY IMAGES

The aftermath of a landslide in Shenzhen. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1 Shanghai Stampede:
About 30 minutes before midnight on Dec. 31, 2014, people were jostling to climb a viewing platform next to the Pu river on the scenic Bund promenade when the stampede started. The crush killed 36 people and injured 49, blemishing the image of China's most prosperous and modern metropolis. Investigators found local police were unprepared to handle the size of the crowd, estimated at 300,000 people. The Communist Party boss, district police chief and a third local official in the Huangpu riverfront district were fired and disciplined for corruption.

2 Yangtze Sinking:
The Eastern Star cruise ship capsized in severe winds on the Yangtze River, causing China's worst shipwreck in more than 60 years. More than 440 people died in the June 1 disaster. Captain Zhang Shunwen was arrested after he was rescued from the river, with investigators looking into why he chose to sail into the storm instead of dropping anchor. A government agency in years prior had cited the ship for safety violations.

3 Tianjin Explosions:
A series of explosions at a chemical warehouse on Aug. 12 levelled a swath of the port city of Tianjin, killing 173 and injuring nearly 800. Investigators found that a company, Ruihai Logistics, illegally had stored the combustible chemicals within 1 kilometre of a residential area. The Communist Party's anti-graft watchdog placed the administrator of China's work safety regulator, Yang Dongliang, who had previously served as Tianjin vice mayor, under investigation.

4 Shenzhen Landslide:
A mountain of excavated soil and construction waste toppled after being soaked by heavy rains, hitting buildings in an industrial park in Shenzhen on Dec. 20. At least 85 people are missing, and an official microblog said survival possibilities in the collapsed buildings were small.

Some residents have blamed government negligence for allowing the giant debris pile to build up, while questions have been raised about the weaknesses of the factories and dormitories that crumbled under the landslide.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HEALTH SCIENCE

Blood policies amended

The three-decade-old U.S. ban on blood donations from gay and bisexual men was formally lifted Monday, but major restrictions will continue to limit who can donate.

The Food and Drug Administration said it is replacing the lifetime ban with a new policy barring donations from men who have had sex with a man in the previous year. While the one-year-ban has been criticized by activists it matches policies in other countries, including Australia, Japan and the U.K.

Gay rights activists said the new policy is a "step in the right direction," but falls short.

"It continues to stigmatize gay and bisexual men," said David Stacy, of the Human Rights Campaign, the largest U.S. gay rights group. "It simply cannot be justified in light of current scientific research and updated blood screening technology."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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KENYA

Muslims protect bus from armed militants

Muslims in a bus in northern Kenya helped dress non-Muslims passengers in Islamic garb, to prevent Islamic extremists from identifying them for slaughter, witnesses said Monday.

Two people died in the attacks in northern Mandera County when gunmen believed to be Somalia's al-Shabab rebels shot at a bus and truck headed for Mandera town, North Eastern Regional Coordinator Mohamud Saleh said.

The bus was from travelling from the capital city, Nairobi, with 60 passengers when it was stopped at Papa City by a group of Islamic militants who shot the windscreen, witnesses said.

Abdrirahman Hussien, a 28-year-old teacher, said some of the Muslim passengers gave non-Muslims head scarfs to try and conceal their identities when the bus stopped, probably remembering a previous attack in the same region last year when al-Shabab gunmen killed 28 non-Muslims from a bus.

An extremist entered the bus and ordered everyone to get out and form two separate groups of non-Muslims and Muslims, said Hussein. One person, a non-Muslim decided to run and was shot in the back and died, he said. He said several non-Muslims managed to group with the Muslims.

A police official who insisted on anonymity because he is not authorized to give information to the media said that before the rebels could take action on the non-Muslims, a brave Muslim man fooled the attackers by saying that a truck full of police officers that was escorting bus was not far behind.

The officer said the lie about the police escort prompted the extremists to order everyone back on the bus and told them to drive off.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

28

Al-Shabab militants separated non-Muslims from Muslims on a bus on Nov 22, 2014, and killed 28 non-Muslims. That December, 36 non-Muslim quarry workers were killed. In July 14 quarry workers were killed.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Lindsay Graham drops out of presidential race

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham ended his 2016 campaign for president Monday, saying he remains committed to working to achieve security for the American people and helping the GOP expand its base.

The 60-year-old senator warned that the current GOP front-runner Donald Trump cannot defeat a Democrat like Hillary Clinton "without some major adjustments."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Six Americans dead in Taliban suicide bombing

A suicide attacker rammed an explosives-laden motorcycle into a joint NATO-Afghan patrol Monday, killing six American troops in the deadliest attack on international forces since August. Two U.S. troops and an Afghan were wounded.

"Our heartfelt sympathies go out to the families and friends of those affected in this tragic incident, especially during this holiday season," said U.S. Army Brig. Gen. William Shoffner, head of public affairs at NATO's Resolute Support base in Kabul.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The team at Power Up Audio. Their work includes Tower Fall, the critically acclaimed Crypt of the NecroDancer, and Darkest Dungeon. COURTESY POWER UP AUDIO

Vancouver studio finds its niche in video games

SOUND DESIGN

Power Up focus on audio proves to be right move

Andrew McCutcheon
For Metro | Vancouver

A Vancouver video game studio returned home earlier this month after a fruitful showing at Sony's annual gaming conference in San Francisco.

What's surprising is that this particular studio, Power Up Audio, doesn't actually make video games of their own. Rather, they work with other developers and studios to create the digital soundscapes which will immerse, delight and engage players.

Despite focusing on audio, just one aspect of game design, Power Up's Kevin Regamey said their approach has resulted in great success.

"We're trying to get this niche, indie market to take notice, and it's working pretty well," said Regamey, who is Power Up's creative director and co-founder.

"Right now we're booking into next June."

Success was by no means a guarantee, however, when Regamey and co-founder Jeff Tangsoc started the company back in the fall of 2012.

Before Power Up, Regamey and Tangsoc were employed by a large game developer in Vancouver. However, working for a big company left them disappointed and lacking of creative control.

"It was very disconnected," Regamey said. "It was about getting the work done, not the quality of the work."

This creative disconnect took its toll, and by June 2012, both Regamey and Tangsoc had quit their jobs. After raising funds from family and friends, they founded Power Up that October.

> **"Towerfall was our breakaway hit ... It's kind of what got us started."**
> Kevin Regamey

"I was nervous. It's a hard industry." said Regamey, "I'm a confident guy, and so is Jeff, but failure was very realistic."

Regamey and Tangsoc needn't have worried, however, as Power Up ended up working on over 60 different titles in their first year alone. This busy, successful beginning culminated with their work on Towerfall; Ascension, an indie darling which had grossed over half a million dollars by April 2014.

"Towerfall was our breakaway hit," Regamey said, "It's kind of what got us started."

Power Up only became larger after the success of Tower Fall. Their work continued with the critically acclaimed Crypt of the NecroDancer, and more recently, an independent game called Darkest Dungeon, created by Vancouver developers at Red Hook Studios.

REAL ESTATE

Realtors trying virtual reality to woo investors

Overseas investors looking to park their money in Canadian real estate could soon be donning headsets and touring upcoming condo developments in virtual reality, according to the founder of a Toronto-based technology firm.

Invent Dev turns floor plans of new developments into 3D, immersive mockups that can be experienced in virtual reality, such as through the Oculus Rift system, or via the Samsung Gear VR headset.

David Payne, the company's founder and CEO, says he's been getting tremendous interest from the Chinese community. "They are very excited about the potential," he said, noting that in the past week alone he has received three media inquiries from Chinese news outlets.

The technology could help Canadian developers tap into global markets by allowing prospective buyers to tour a space without ever having to board a plane, he said. "They can now, from the comfort of their own home, view any floor plan that they want, with the finishes they want, and feel like they're actually inside that home," says Payne.

The technology can benefit developers in other ways as well, says Payne. Rather than building model suites, they can create virtual reality mockups of an upcoming development — a significant cost saving for the company, says Payne.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Invent Dev founder David Payne. THE CANADIAN PRESS

B.C. TECH FIRMS

Startups threaten 'dinosaur' industries

One technology startup is using artificial intelligence to save people who book online flights up to 80 per cent. Another helps farmers boost their crop yields with a mobile app that manages operations from seed to sale. A third aims to replace bank accounts with only a card and an app.

They're all part of a boom in digital-technology startups in Vancouver that are challenging old methods of doing business, and they're out to "disrupt" everything from travel to agriculture to financial services.

"You adapt or you die," said Ray Walia, CEO of Launch Academy, a non-profit firm that trains and mentors such startups. The organization has helped entrepreneurs start more than 350 companies, raising about $57 million in funding and creating over 635 jobs across 15 industries. They include TripDelta, Farm At Hand and Koho.

Walia said employers outside the technology world must change the mindset that "bleeding-edge" advancements don't matter to their industries.

"It's those technology companies that are going to help those incumbents — those dinosaurs — stay alive."

About 84,000 British Columbians were employed by over 9,000 tech companies in 2014, according to the provincial Technology Ministry — more than in mining, forestry, and oil and gas combined.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ray Walia THE CANADIAN PRESS

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metro VIEWS

Witnesses who can pick a recent robbery culprit out of a line-up are usually right, a new study says. But if the test is done months later at trial, false memories may have taken hold.

Your essential daily news

Tuesday, December 22, 2015

EMMA TEITEL: ON A BEAUTY QUEEN'S BLESSING IN DISGUISE

Can you honestly say you remember last year's Miss Universe winner — or runner-up? I know I can't, because last year's pageant was a blunder-free affair.

If aliens crash-land on earth tomorrow and demand to know what humans mean when they write #Fail, world leaders should provide them with a tape of Sunday night's Miss Universe pageant.

The now-viral event was more awkward than a thousand puberties because its host, comedian Steve Harvey, accidentally crowned the wrong beauty queen. Harvey misread his most important cue card and declared Ariadna Gutierrez Arevalo, a.k.a. Miss Colombia, winner of the competition, when in fact she was first runner-up. When Gutierrez proceeded to bask in her newfound glory — the sparkly tiara already resting on her head — Harvey interjected to announce his mistake. The rightful recipient of the Miss Universe title was in fact Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach, a.k.a. Miss Philippines, who, thoroughly confused, walked to centre stage where she was forced to claimed her competitor's crown.

Nobody was a winner on Sunday, not Miss Colombia, who likely lived her worst nightmare, not Wurtzbach who was deprived of her shining moment, and certainly not Harvey, whose initial tweet apologizing for his error was itself rife with errors; he spelled both the Philippines and Colombia incorrectly. (Harvey, the author of a popular dating advice book, Act Like a Lady, Think Like a Man, should consider writing a new tome: Read Everything Twice.) This year's Miss Universe pageant appears to be a lose-lose-lose situation; the sort of colossal public slip-up in which you feel deeply sorry for everyone involved.

But appearances can be deceiving — especially where beauty pageants are concerned. Take a step back from the cruel spectacle of the event, and Harvey's mistake, unfortunate and awkward as it was, may actually be a blessing for the women affected. For starters, we know their names. Can you honestly say that you remember last year's Miss Universe winner — or runner-up? I know I can't because last year's pageant was a blunder-free affair. If the goal of the pageant contestant is to be crowned before an adoring audience and strut across a stage blowing kisses uninterrupted, then Gutierrez Arevalo and Wurtzbach have every reason to curl up in a ball and cry. But if their goal is lasting exposure and relevance on the world stage, they should rejoice.

Temporary tears The accidental crowning of Ariadna Gutierrez Arevalo, above, may have been quickly followed by the sting of disappointment, but both the victorious Miss Universe and the hastily re-christened runner-up should be grateful for the publicity, Emma Teitel writes. GETTY IMAGES

Thanks to Harvey's epic mess-up they will be remembered! This is especially true of Gutierrez Arevalo. Sure she was humiliated and dethroned on live television in front of millions of people, but had there been no mix-up and ensuing chaos she would be a complete unknown today — unable to command international media attention and (what will likely come in the following weeks and months) high profile party appearances, and speaking engagements. You can see it now, in lights: "The Girl Who Was Almost Queen."

This runner-up-as-star principle isn't exactly unprecedented. In 2010 Detroit Tigers pitcher Armando Galarraga came extremely close to pitching a perfect game when umpire Jim Joyce — the Steve Harvey in this scenario — made an incorrect call, ruling one of Galarraga's opponents safe on base when he was, in fact, out. Thanks to Joyce (who, like Harvey, apologized profusely for his bad call), Galarraga didn't get his perfect game. But he did get boatloads of respect and sympathy from media and baseball fans. In fact, the incident, known today as "the Imperfect Game" or the "Galarraga game," is remembered as an example of pitching genius and a spectacle of good sportsmanship (Galarraga was unusually gracious in the face a terrible call).

It's hard to believe that Galarraga's game would stand out so distinctly today had he gotten his wish and pitched a perfect game. In fact, you could argue that more people know who he is precisely because he was the victim of a bad call. The same can be said about Ariadna Gutierrez Arevalo who, thanks to Harvey's colossal mistake and the graciousness with which she gave up her crown, will not slink into obscurity. It's possible she'll be remembered longer than her competitor.

"No one remembers who came in second," said the golfer Walter Hagen. The quote is a favourite among "winners" — among them, surprise, surprise, Donald Trump. But perhaps it's time to amend the expression — or more specifically, to complete it. No one remembers who came in second, unless, of course, they got royally screwed out of first.

Emma Teitel is a national columnist for the Toronto Star. She has been a front-of-the-book columnist for Maclean's magazine for the past four years, focusing on a wide range of subjects including women's issues and popular culture. She won the National Magazine Awards gold award for columns in 2013.

metroview

'Real change' under Trudeau doesn't even begin to cover it

Richard Gwyn

For roughly the next fortnight, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will have nothing more strenuous to do than enjoy himself with his family and utter occasional seasonal pleasantries.

He's more than earned this time off. For six weeks now, Trudeau has been going like a bat out of hell, or, more directly, like a politician convinced he should, and can, transform the country, and even to some extent the world itself.

His pace is unprecedented. The one parallel in our history is the commitment Lester Pearson made to start his tenure with "60 Days of Decision," or doing everything better than had his predecessor, John Diefenbaker.

His program came to an abrupt end when his finance minister, Walter Gordon, brought down a bungled budget he then had to withdraw. Thereafter Pearson moved cautiously, although he went on to introduce universal health care, the Canada Pension Plan, and our flag.

Trudeau has moved far faster. His single most important project would transform the relationship between native people and other Canadians by implementing the 94 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and granting "nation-to-nation" status, near autonomy, to indigenous organizations, political and cultural.

Others are as ambitious. Canada's first-ever serious commitment to climate change. An increase in taxes to generate more jobs for the middle class, but at the cost of increasing the deficit. A new electoral system.

And on and on. A new relationship between the provinces and the federal government. Withdrawing Canadian troops from the Middle East except as trainers well away from the front lines. Bringing 25,000 refugees from Syria.

Trudeau's phrase "real change" is inadequate. Only in the years after the Second World War, when Canadians first embraced the welfare state, has the country been challenged by so radical a political and cultural program.

Signs of stress have begun to appear. At the climate conference in Paris, Trudeau declared that on this issue Canada would exercise "a new leadership role." He was overdoing it by a wide margin. We're latecomers to the cause. We account for only 1.6 per cent of global emissions.

The sharpest stress comes from the economy. Finance Minister Bill Morneau has signalled the promise to hold the increased debt to $10 billion over two years is out of date.

The sense that "Canada is back" hasn't changed. Trudeau should use the break to keep doing what he's doing, a good deal more slowly. He has a huge majority on his side. But if their jobs vanish or their salaries shrink, the loyalty of many will turn to themselves and their families.

Richard Gwyn is a Toronto Star columnist.

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metro LIFE

Your essential daily news

J.K. Rowling says she 'loves' a black Hermione as Noma Dumezweni cast in Harry Potter play

Homework isn't what it used to be

Heavy backpacks are passé as kids' homework is increasingly completed online. It makes supporting a child's learning at home especially challenging for parents. Here are four teacher-recommended learning apps that will help kids to keep up — or maybe even get ahead. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Grade 8 student Asha Ibrahim, 13, left, reacts to getting a correct answer as she does her homework with Brainrush. Her cousin Hanan Hassan, 13, and also in Grade 8, middle, and sister Amina Ibrahim, 11, Grade 7 encourage her. CHRIS SO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Brainrush

Best age: All ages
Price: Free
App store rating: n/a (available at brainrush.com)

"Of all the apps I've used with my class, BrainRush is the best," says David Vaillancourt, a middle school teacher in Toronto. This platform allows teachers and students to play, create and share learning games. The use of "adaptive practice" ensures that students are challenged, but not overwhelmed. "Students look forward to using BrainRush, and the games' ability to adapt and respond to the individual student is a unique feature not available with a lot of ed-tech apps," Vaillancourt says. "Parents find it a valuable resource for learning at home and they can easily monitor their children's' progress."

DragonBox Algebra

Best age: Students 5 to 12 (and up)
Price: $4.99
App store rating: 4½ stars out of 5

Brian Aspinall, a Grade 7 and 8 teacher in Chatham, Ont., recommends DragonBox Algebra as an engaging, problem-based method of helping students learn basic concepts such as variables and balancing equations. "I've been using this app for years and students really enjoy learning with it," he says.

Google slides

Best age: 7 years old
Price: Free
App store rating: 4½ out of 5

Traditional homework is often solitary and boring, but Google Slides changes all that. Students use the app to write journals, create digital books, solve math problems and create presentations. Their work can be easily shared with peers and teachers for immediate feedback. It's like a dynamic, interactive 21st-century diary.

Tools 4 Students

Best age: Students 5 to 14
Price: $1.19
App store rating: Not yet rated

Jonathan So, a Grade 6 teacher, finds Tools 4 Students invaluable. The iPad app provides 25 different organizer templates to help students organize their thinking, take better notes, or prepare their thoughts before writing. So recommends Tools 4 Students for essays and research activities.

Rewire kids' brains to regulate behaviour

Dr. Vanessa Lapointe says that as a psychologist, about 90 per cent of the parents she sees come in because of behavioral challenges in their children. CONTRIBUTED

PARENTING

Discipline by fear is a short term solution, expert says

Picture your kid misbehaving. Maybe they're jumping on the sofa, or having a meltdown, or throwing toys at their siblings. As a parent — what do you do? Send them to their room, make them skip dinner… or offer them a reward if they cut it out, perhaps?

You might want to rethink your methods, according to a new book from Vancouver-based psychologist Dr. Vanessa Lapointe. In Discipline Without Damage: How to Get Your Kids to Behave Without Messing Them Up (out in January), the mother of two puts parenting strategies in perspective — and debunks some popular ways to discipline your kids.

Lapointe talks about why certain forms of discipline can impact kids' development, and what parents should do instead.

In the book, you talk about common ways parents handle those moments of acting out — things like time-outs, grounding kids, and offering rewards. What's wrong with those long-engrained approaches?

First of all, we have to land at why those approaches have become so popular. It's because they afford instant gratification. When you give a child a time out, you're going to have an immediate reaction — the child stopping their behaviour. Yes, you've got the behaviour to stop, but you've managed to stop it at a cost — it's out of fear. It's like going to the carnival and you play the whack-a-mole game; you've whacked it down, but it's going to pop up in another way, like another behaviour or frustration, because the child continues to have this unmet need for the parent to come alongside them. Frustration often morphs into aggression, either outwardly or inwardly directed, which could mean self-loathing or self-harm.

So what's the better way to discipline kids, then?

The thing is, children are going to be children, based on how their brains are growing. Behaviours we look at as challenging are just a natural part of being a child. We need to come alongside and connect with them. The key to discipline without damage is to be disciplining through a relational connection with your child that meets them in their natural state.

You give one example of a mom calming down her daughter Sophia by taking her aside and explaining a situation to her calmly. It seems great, but how do parents achieve that in moments of stress and frustration?

Parents need to be in a regulated state to come alongside their children and be the regulator in that relationship. When you're looking in on a child who's engaged in some kind of challenging behaviour, you might see that behaviour as that of a child who needs to be schooled and put into place. Instead of seeing your child as a brat, see them as someone who is having a hard time while their brain is really fired up. When you see them through those kinds of eyes, it invites a whole new kind of emotion. If you lived in my house, I'm not a rock star, and I'm not doing this perfectly all the time. There are days when I'm a hot mess! But no-one says you need to be perfect — you just need to do this enough times so your child's neural circuitry holds onto enough over time. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

‘Fat but fit’ is not healthy: Study

RESEARCH

Heavy people with high activity levels still at risk

A new Swedish study has dismissed the idea that ‘fat but fit’ is OK, finding instead that obese men with a high aerobic fitness level were still at a higher risk of early death than those of a normal weight but with a lower fitness level.

Aerobic fitness level and obesity have been well studied in older participants, but less so in older adolescents. Wanting to look at a link between aerobic fitness in late adolescence and risk of early death, the team of researchers from Umeå University, Sweden followed 1,317,713 men with a mean age of 18 between 1969 and 1996.

The team also looked to see if risk of early death was linked to the level of aerobic fitness in those that are obese, as well as those of normal weight.

FITNESS

Lower weight

Men with a normal weight had a lower risk of death than obese participants even if their fitness levels were lower, showing a 30 per cent lower risk of early death.

The team of researchers assessed participants’ aerobic fitness by asking them to cycle until they had to stop due to fatigue, and assessed causes of death using national registers.

During a mean followup period of 29 years, the results showed that increased aerobic fitness was linked to a decreased risk of early death, with men in the highest fifth of aerobic fitness showing a 48 per cent lower risk of early death from any cause compared with those in the lowest fifth of aerobic fitness.

However, although aerobic fitness was also associated with a reduced risk of death from any cause in both normal-weight and overweight individuals, these benefits were reduced in obese individuals.

In addition, men with a normal weight had a lower risk of death than obese participants even if their fitness levels were lower, showing a 30 per cent lower risk of early death.

There were also no significant health benefits at all in those participants who were in the extreme obese category.

The study was published in the International Journal of Epidemiology.

For an average of 12 years the team looked at 334,161 European men and women measuring height, weight and waist circumference. Participants were also asked to report levels of physical activity. The results, published in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, found that as body mass index (BMI) increased, the benefits of the walking decreased. AFP

ROSE REISMAN THE SAVVY EATER

THIS WEEK: Shrimp appetizers

Shrimp appetizers are a popular choice for holiday parties, but staying away from the deep-fried variety will keep it healthier.

PICK THIS

PC Jumbo Cooked Shrimp

Portion 8 shrimp
Calories 90
Fat 0.5 g
Protein 20 g

SKIP THIS

PC Butterflied Shrimp

Portion 6 shrimp
Calories 300
Fat 16 g
Protein 6 g

HERE’S WHY

Equivalent in fat to an 8 oz sirloin steak.

Those innocent-looking small appetizers that we pop in our mouth are hiding excess fat, calories and sodium — and of course, no one eats just one! For a healthier holiday app, cooked jumbo shrimp are a great choice. They are a good source of lean protein with virtually no fat. Dip them in a zesty cocktail sauce or toss into a salad or pasta. Avoid the breaded and deep-fried shrimp, which have a load of unnecessary calories and fat, and much less protein. Too many of those and you’ll for sure have to hit the gym in the New Year.

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PITCHES

Japanese festival offers big money for short-film ideas

A Japanese festival focused on the art of the short film is offering a new award of nearly a million dollars to a director from anywhere in the world with a great pitch for a movie.

Organizers say short video is where audiences are going, as entertainment increasingly gets consumed on smartphones. They also believe the format holds potential for novice filmmakers, bringing fresh insight.

The deadline for submitting a 500-word pitch on what's billed as a "thrilling, exciting, moving" storyline is Feb. 29. The pitch must be written in either Japanese or English.

"Movies aren't about length," said Tetsuya Bessho, an actor who founded the festival in 1999, likening the best short films to the minimalist but fine-tuned concentration of haiku poetry.

500,000¥

Five finalists will be chosen. Each gets a 500,000 yen ($4,000) prize. Then one will receive 100 million yen ($800,000) to make their movie. That winner will get an additional 1 million yen ($8,000) award.

"There are Hollywood flops with everything thrown in for marketing. You can't decide if it's a comedy, a love story or an action film. People are getting bored with that kind of movie," said Beshho, whose films include Godzilla vs. Mothra and Solar Crisis, with Charlton Heston.

His festival has showcased the best in short films, such as Toyland, which won an Oscar, and the light-hearted comedy I Hate Musicals.

It also honours less conventional work from a new breed of creators, including Indonesian auteur Yosep Anggi Noen, who was also featured at the Rotterdam and Busan international film festivals.

His A Lady Caddy Who Never Saw a Hole in One, which depicts how farmland in Indonesia is being destroyed by golf courses, won the Grand Prix at Short Shorts last year. It took just a day and a half to shoot, and involved a team of just six people.

"It can be more free, more independent," Anggi said of the short film format. "Nobody tells me how to make that film." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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JOHANNA SCHNELLER
WHAT I'M WATCHING

Live-action brings energy

Undateable now films every episode live and tweeting is encouraged. CONTRIBUTED

THE SHOW: Undateable, season three, episode eight (City/NBC)
THE MOMENT: The Fourth Wall

Permanently single dude Danny (Chris D'Elia) just met Charlotte (Whitney Cummings) at his local watering hole, but already they feel a connection.

"I bet your sex life is like Nic Cage's movie career," she taunts him.

"You'll do anything."

She stretches out her legs. He cracks wise about her having balls. She says one of them has to. "Careful," he says, holding back real laughter. "Don't get us cancelled" — here he looks straight into the camera — "twice."

The studio audience cackles on cue.

This series joins a growing wave of live TV, as networks scramble to give people a reason to watch shows as they air.

The Sound of Music Live! and The Wiz Live! scored big in their broadcasts. Grease Live is set to air January 31.

Tyler Perry recently announced he'll host a live musical about Jesus, The Passion, this coming Palm Sunday.

Undateable floundered in its first two seasons, but a live broadcast last May perked up ratings. Now every episode airs live, complete with musical guests who perform during breaks, live Tweeting encouraged (the actors' Twitter handles appear on screen) and much smashing of the fourth wall that usually divides the cast and audience.

In-jokes are big (Cummings and D'Elia costarred in her show, Whitney), as are stunt casting, winking at the audience, exaggerating any mishaps or missed lines, and hamming it up for the cheap seats.

The cast sure seems to have a good time.

But they should redirect some of that energy into the scripts.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

Colombia stands by runner-up beauty

Former Miss Universe Paulina Vega removes the crown from this year's Miss Colombia, Ariadna Gutierrez, in order to give it to Miss Philippines, Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach. GETTY IMAGES

TITLE MIXUP

Miss Universe host declares wrong winner

The beauty pageant-obsessed South American nation briefly celebrated what appeared to be an unprecedented feat: back-to-back Miss Universe titles.

From President Juan Manuel Santos to Miss Colombia's relatives in the Caribbean port city of Barranquilla, Colombians shouted in joy when it was announced that Ariadna Gutierrez Arevalo had won this year's crown.

But the celebrating turned to shouts of anger seconds later as host Steve Harvey announced on live television from Las Vegas that he had mistakenly read from the cue card. The contestant from the Philippines was the new Miss Universe, not Miss Colombia.

"The entire country, and our family, was overcome with emotion," Alvaro Arevalo, the Colombian runner-up's cousin, told Blu Radio in an interview Monday. "The truth is we're a little shocked."

The sudden reversal even caught by the president by surprise, forcing him to reverse his initial celebratory Tweet.

"For us you'll always be our Miss Universe," he wrote in a message to Gutierrez after the error was discovered. "We feel very proud."

Colombians are obsessed with beauty and pageants are a major draw across social classes. But unlike neighbouring Venezuela, which has won seven Miss Universe titles, Colombians are accustomed to falling short of the crown, with four runner-up appearances since 1992.

Before last year's crowning of Paulina Vega, only one other Colombian had won the Miss Universe title, in 1958.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TV COMEDY

Reitman dynasty is growing

Catherine Reitman knows her last name goes far in Hollywood.

After all, her dad Ivan Reitman is a veritable giant in comedic film and her Oscar-nominated brother Jason Reitman is an established director in his own right.

Nevertheless, she's not taking anything for granted as she leaps from budding TV actress to TV series creator with her comedy Workin' Moms, currently in development at CBC-TV.

It's easy to assume that a famous name opens doors, but the 34-year-old says it can easily work against you.

"Usually when people hear my last name, before they really get to know me or work with me, there's probably a lot of preconceived notions that come with that. And I imagine most of them aren't good," Reitman says by phone in a recent interview from Los Angeles.

"Because for every wonderful second-generation of a famous person, there's people that aren't that way. More entitled people. People who probably ride that coattail. And that hasn't been my brother's story, that hasn't been my story."

Between the Sheens, the Coppolas, the Smiths and the Hanks, famous offspring abound on film and TV, with Canada boasting a few of its own mini-dynasties in the making.

There's, of course, movie star Donald Sutherland and his acting sons Kiefer and Rossif; sitcom star Alan Thicke and his crooning son Robin; film producer Kevin Tierney and his actor/director/screenwriter son Jacob.

INSTAGRAM.COM/REITCATOU

Catherine Reitman is creating a comedy for CBC.

CBC-TV is also home to the Levy clan, where famous pop Eugene shares the screen with son Dan and daughter Sarah in their fish-out-of-water comedy Schitt's Creek.

Reitman, whose acting credits include Black-ish and It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia, expects Workin' Moms to be a tough learning curve. In addition to being the show's creator, she'll serve as a writer, director and star, not to mention new mom to a second baby due next year.

But she's fuelled by passion for the material, noting it sprang directly from her own experiences with her first child, which included a bout with post-partum depression.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ALSO BORN INTO A SHOW BIZ CLAN

Fame and the family name

Dan Levy spearheads CBC's Schitt's Creek which returns for a second season on Jan. 12. The younger Levy admits his career has taken a bit of a shortcut to stardom.

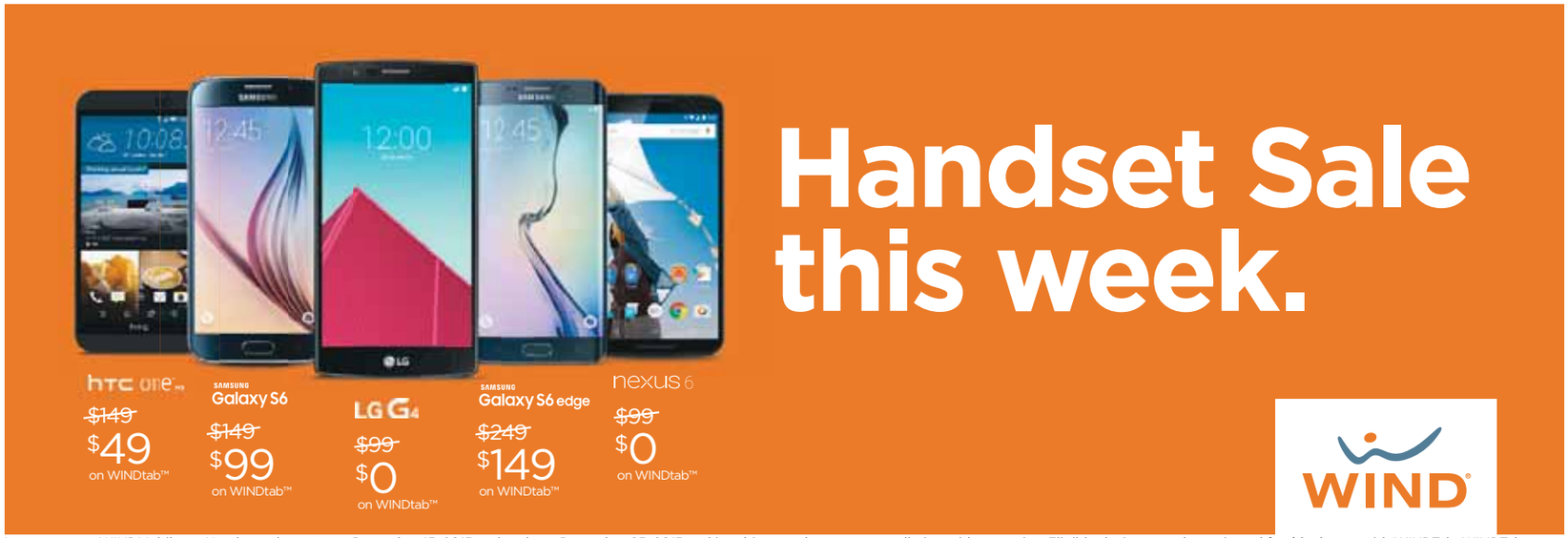
"I jumped into the first season circumventing a lot of things that I think someone in my position normally would experience, whether it's a writers' room, the growth that a lot of writers have before getting to run a room — I sort of just cut right to the chase," says Levy.

"That is something I'm very, very grateful for but it was something that took a lot of time in terms of convincing certain people that you can take me seriously."

It's one thing to get your foot in the door. It's another to prove you deserve to be there, he continues.

"It's very easy to say, 'Well, this person got a job because their dad does this,"' he says.

"The reality is, there's so much money in entertainment that no one can afford to take risks like that. You really have to work almost harder than everyone else to prove yourself."



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Let it snow, let it snow, let it shine

CAROLS

Study looks at lyrical tributes to weather in popular song

Holiday songs mention the heat nearly as often as they do the snow, according to a recent study by British meteorologists who combed through pop music lyrics looking for references to the weather.

"Perhaps surprisingly, in Christmas songs in our primary list the word 'cold' is used less than one might expect, but instead is implied through idealistic Christmas images of snow," the authors say.

Take Let It Snow, for example: "Oh the weather outside is frightful/But the fire is so delightful."

Many holiday songs feature some version of this contrast because they are written for an audience in the northern hemisphere, the researchers say.

The only exception they found was the upbeat Christmas countryfolk single Summer by Australia's Sunny Cowgirls, which describes barbecues, jetskiing and "runnin' round with the sprinklers on."

Weather can act as a muse or metaphor in song. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sally Brown and her co-authors from the universities of Oxford, Newcastle and Reading didn't only study Christmas-themed music; they found 759 weather songs in a karaoke database, from Good Day Sunshine to Blowin' in the Wind. (The majority of the weather songs, in fact, were by The Beatles or Bob Dylan.)

The researchers' aim was to investigate "how society portrays weather in music and the types of weather that inspire musicians." But they also just wanted to have a little fun, the lead author Sally Brown, a research fellow at the University of Southampton, told the Toronto Star.

It all started on a lark, she said. At a conference in 2012, the meteorologists played an icebreaker game where they listed off weather-related tunes: You Are the Sunshine of My Life, Walking on Sunshine, It's Raining Men — the list went on.

They had so much fun doing it that they continued in their spare time, between studying coastal geomorphology and experimental atmospheric physics, Brown said.

Out of the 190 songs that had weather as a primary theme, sun and sunshine were the most common references, followed by rain. The researchers say they may explore the subject further by studying music in other languages or focusing on certain genres.

Whether they do or not, their experiment has already changed the way some of the authors listen to music.

"Last week, I was working away in a hotel and they had Christmas music and I was counting the weather references," Brown said. "It was Frosty the Snowman." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

STUDY FINDINGS

Weather holds the key

Very often, the weather is used as a metaphor for love or a relationship, lead author Sally Brown, a research fellow at the University of Southampton noted.

Bus Stop by The Hollies, for example: "All that summer/We enjoyed it/Wind and rain and shine/That umbrella, we employed it/By August, she was mine."

For some songwriters, the weather seems to have acted as their muse. George Harrison apparently wrote Here Comes the Sun after leaving a business meeting in April 1969, on the first sunny day of the year after a particularly dreary winter, according to the study. Meteorological records show that that April was the sunniest month on record until 1984. When Harrison sang "It's been a long cold lonely winter," he may have been speaking literally.

They also found a correlation between certain weather references and the keys that a song is in. Mentioning the sun "significantly increases the probability" that a song is in a major key, while songs in minor or mixed keys are more likely to mention the rain.

If a song in their database mentioned a rainbow, it was 100 per cent likely to be in a major key. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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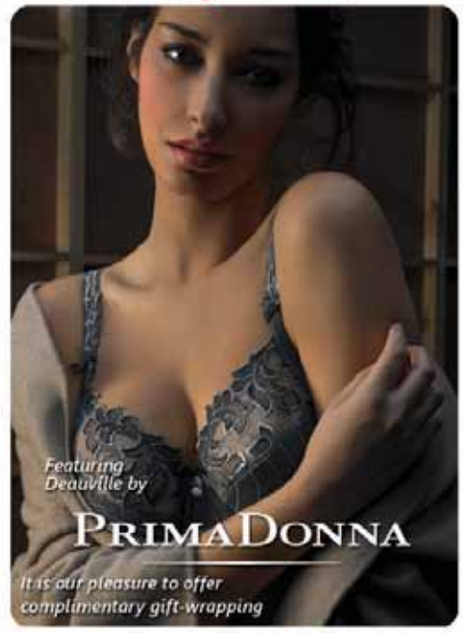

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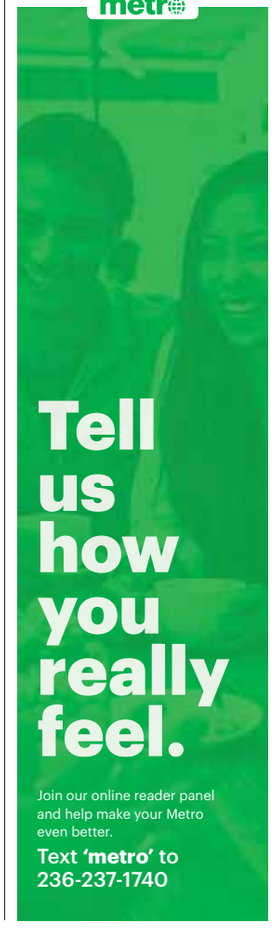
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metro SPORTS

The Boston Red Sox will retire Baseball Hall of Famer Wade Boggs' No. 26 during a ceremony at Fenway Park on May 26

Team Canada's Barzal is 'becoming a player'

WORLD JUNIORS

Burnaby Winter Club product has been tearing up WHL

Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

Everyone always notices the points.

For Mathew Barzal, production has never been an issue, marching along this season to a standout 1.72 points-per-game pace for the Seattle Thunderbirds before he was summoned earlier this month to Hockey Canada's selection camp for the upcoming world junior championship.

On Sunday, the 18-year-old Barzal, who is from Coquitlam and a Burnaby Winter Club product, was officially named to Team Canada's roster. The tournament begins Boxing Day with Canada facing off against the rival U.S. in Helsinki, Finland.

The fact Barzal made the team isn't at all a surprise to those within the Thunderbirds organization.

On only five occasions this Western Hockey League season, Barzal has been held off the scoresheet, meaning he's produced at least a point or better in 80 per cent of Seattle's games that he's been in the lineup for.

The points are great, 43 of them (nine goals, 34 assists) in 25 games this season. That's what the Thunderbirds expect from Barzal, a New York Islanders first-round draft pick in 2015, and he has delivered.

They're the bottom-line evidence of a player that not only possesses tremendous skill — Barzal has drawn comparisons in the past to fellow BWC grad and current NHLer Ryan Nugent-Hopkins when it comes to handling the puck — but a player that has become increasingly more reliable and dominant in just about every aspect of his game, according to Thunderbirds general manager Russ Farwell.

1.72

Barzal is averaging 1.72 points per game with the Thunderbirds this season.

"He's getting points, but (Barzal) has always gotten points," Farwell told Metro.

"I think if you look a little deeper, what he's done — that he doesn't get as much acclaim for — is Matt has become a real good player all around the ice. He's good down low in our end, helping out defensively. He's a solid guy one-on-one against people in key times.

"It won't surprise me that he can go to Team Canada and … shift gears and take a different role and do a good job of it because (Barzal) is a good player. He's never had to do this before. He just always got points and that's what everyone talked about … but you don't play in the NHL like that and he wants to play in the NHL. He's becoming a player."

Mathew Barzal was selected 16th overall by the New York Islanders in this year's NHL draft .
BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

NHL IN BRIEF

Bruins Talbot suspended two games for hit to head

The NHL has suspended Boston Bruins forward Maxime Talbot two games without pay for his check to the head of New Jersey's Jiri Tlusty.

The check occurred at 14:30 of the second period of Boston's 2-1 win over the Devils on Sunday. After Tlusty cycled the puck into the Bruins corner, Talbot delivered a late hit that made contact with the Devils forward's head.

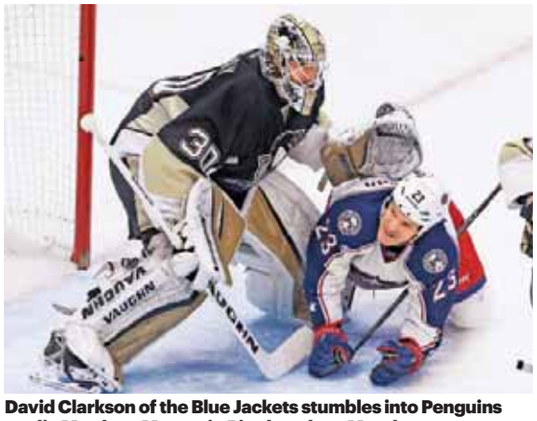
No penalty was called on the play, and Tlusty remained in the game.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Varlamov's sparkling net work earns first star

Colorado Avalanche goaltender Semyon Varlamov, Washington Capitals right-wing T.J. Oshie and Minnesota Wild centre Mikko Koivu have been named the NHL three stars of the week.

Varlamov was named first star after posting a 3-0-0 record with a 0.67 goals-against average, .981 save percentage and one shutout to help the Avalanche extend their winning streak to five games. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Semyon Varlamov
GETTY IMAGES



David Clarkson of the Blue Jackets stumbles into Penguins goalie Matthew Murray in Pittsburgh on Monday.
GENE J. PUSKAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Pens' new coach finally on the board

Evgeni Malkin and Phil Kessel each scored two goals and the Pittsburgh Penguins ended a five-game losing streak with a 5-2 win over the Columbus Blue Jackets on Monday night.

David Warsofsky got his first goal in nearly two years as the Penguins gave coach Mike Sullivan his first victory following an 0-4 start.

Matt Murray stopped 22 shots for his first NHL win.

The Penguins played without captain Sidney Crosby, who missed his first game of the season with a lower-body injury.

Alexander Wenneberg's third goal gave Columbus an early lead, but Pittsburgh responded with four in the second to match the total it put up in Sullivan's first four games combined. Boone Jenner added his 13th for the Blue Jackets.

Joonas Korpisalo made 30 saves in his fourth NHL start.

Sullivan took over for Mike Johnston on Dec. 12, tasked with trying to boost Pittsburgh's sagging offence. The early going has been tough. The Penguins lost the first four games of Sullivan's tenure by a combined 15-4 and were dealt another blow when Crosby complained about a lower-body issue following a 2-1 defeat against Carolina on Saturday.

The Penguins reached the four-goal plateau for only the eighth time in their last 48 regular-season games.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AROUND THE LEAGUE

Caps push win streak to 6

Jason Chimera and Michael Latta scored, and the Washington Capitals held on to beat the Carolina Hurricanes 2-1 for their sixth straight win.

Preds feast on hapless Habs

Pekka Rinne made 35 saves and the Nashville Predators beat Montreal 5-1, giving the Canadiens their eighth loss in their last nine games.

IN BRIEF

Iwakuma back in Seattle

Pitcher Hisashi Iwakuma will receive his $1 million signing bonus from the Seattle Mariners in three equal payments through 2017 as part of his contract that guarantees $12 million but could be worth up to $47.5 million over three years.

Iwakuma will get instalments on Dec. 31 this year and Dec. 1 in each of the following two years.

The 34-year-old right-hander receives a $10 million salary next year under the deal announced last week, and Seattle has $10 million options for 2017 and 2018. Iwakuma would get a $1 million buyout if either option is declined.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mariners add female scout

The Seattle Mariners have hired Amanda Hopkins as an area scout, and the team says she is believed to be the first woman hired as a full-time scout by a major league club since the 1950s. The Mariners announced the move Monday amid a flurry of changes in their scouting department. Hopkins is a recent graduate of the Major League Baseball developmental program.

She graduated in June from Central Washington University, where she played softball for the Wildcats. She is the daughter of Ron Hopkins, a baseball scout for more than 30 years.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Learn from the pain, Herdman urges team

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Coach tells his players World Cup heartbreak a growth lesson

John Herdman doesn't want his players to forget their World Cup pain.

The Canadian women's national team was left bitterly disappointed this summer after crashing out of a tournament the hosts felt was there for the taking, losing 2-1 to England in a heartbreaking quarter-final.

Six months later and with preparations well underway for 2016 Olympic qualifying, Canada's head coach hasn't sensed a World Cup hangover, but rather a renewed belief.

"I don't think you move past something like that," said Herdman. "You have to move through those things. You have to reframe. You have to look at the things that worked well for us that we were really happy about. And you have to look at other aspects where we need to grow."

With that in mind, Canada just wrapped up a four-team event over the weekend in Brazil that saw the squad finish second after losing the final 3-1 to the hosts.

Herdman brought a mixture of youth and experience to South America following a training camp in Vancouver, with

John Herdman high-fives fans prior to the start of the FIFA Women's World Cup quarter-final match between England and Canada in June. RICH KAM/GETTY IMAGES

> **You have to move through those things. You have to reframe.**
> John Herdman

teenagers Kennedy Faulknor (16), Deanne Rose (16), Gabrielle Carle (17) and Marie Levasseur (18) all making their full international debuts.

"What stood out was the performances of the team in some of the games where you really did get to see the quality that we could have moving forward," Herdman said in a telephone interview from Brazil. "The senior players have cultivated a culture where these kids can come in and really play in all phases."

Speed and scoring were among the areas where Canada was lacking at the World Cup. Herdman is hopeful that some of the new blood will help.

"I think the team is comfortable that we've got strategy and structure down," he said.

Canadian captain Christine Sinclair was among the veterans who made the trip to Brazil and said it was encouraging to see some of the younger players fulfil roles with another camp set for next month ahead of CONCACAF Olympic qualifying in February.

"Qualifying is always a stressful time, not going to lie," she said. "It always comes down to one game. You win, you're in. You lose, you're out. Football's a funny game sometimes. I've been on both sides of those games. You can't take any of these teams lightly." THE CANADIAN PRESS

FIFA

Blatter banned 8 years

Banished from soccer's ruling body for eight years for unethical conduct, Sepp Blatter won't give up the presidency of his beloved FIFA without a fight.

"I will fight. I will fight until the end," Blatter said Monday at a news conference that started 90 minutes after he and former protegé, vice-president Michel Platini, were each banned by FIFA's ethics committee.

It was a stunning removal of world soccer's most powerful leaders over a $2 million payment by FIFA to Platini, the president of European soccer's ruling body UEFA. The payment is also the subject of a criminal investigation in Switzerland.

Sepp Blatter KEYSTONE VIA AP

"I'm sad. It can't go on this way. It's not possible," said the 79-year-old Blatter, who has spent more than half his life working for soccer's scandal-hit governing body. "

Already serving a provisional ban, the elected FIFA president and Platini, his long-time likely successor were kicked out of the sport just two months before 209 member federations elect a new leader. Their offences were judged to be conflict of interest and disloyalty to FIFA. They avoided life bans because corruption was not proven.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL

Beckham appeals game suspension

Losing control during Sunday's loss to the Panthers will cost Giants star receiver Odell Beckham Jr. one game.

The NFL on Monday suspended Beckham for next weekend's visit to Minnesota for his conduct against Carolina, when he drew three personal foul penalties. The league cited "multiple violations of safety-related playing rules."

Beckham appealed the decision. His case will be heard by either James Thrash or Derrick Brooks, the hearing officers jointly appointed by the NFL and the players' union.

Without Beckham, the Giants (6-8) would be missing their best offensive weapon as they try to stay alive in the NFC East race.

Beckham and Panthers cornerback Josh Norman tangled from the beginning of the Panthers' 38-35 victory. At one point, Beckham delivered a diving helmet-to-helmet hit on Norman while blocking. There was plenty of pushing, shoving, swinging, wrestling, late hits and trash talking between them.

Beckham has 91 catches for 1,396 yards and 13 TDs, tied for the NFL lead. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Odell Beckham Jr., centre. JULIE JACOBSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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RECIPE Tuscan Chicken Skillet Dinner

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

With meat, veggies and legumes in a single recipe, you don't need anything else for dinner. And you won't miss the mess of more than one pan to clean!

Ready in
Prep time: 30 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 lb chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1/4 tsp oregano
- 1/4 tsp thyme
- 1 1/2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup sun dried tomatoes
- 14 oz can cannellini beans, drained
- 19 oz can tomatoes
- 1/4 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp sugar

Directions

1. Pour the oil into a large skillet and warm to medium heat. Brown the chicken. You may have to work in batches. Remove from the pan and set aside. Drain all but about 1 or 2 Tbsp of fat.

2. Add the mushrooms, oregano and thyme to the pan and allow the mushrooms to become quite soft and brown. Remove them from the pan and set aside.

3. Add the onion and garlic and cook for about 3 minutes until they're soft and fragrant. Add the sugar, sun dried tomatoes, canned tomatoes and beans. Simmer for about 5 minutes, breaking up the tomatoes with the back of a spoon.

4. Gently tip in the chicken and mushrooms and simmer for another 10 minutes, until the meat is cooked through.

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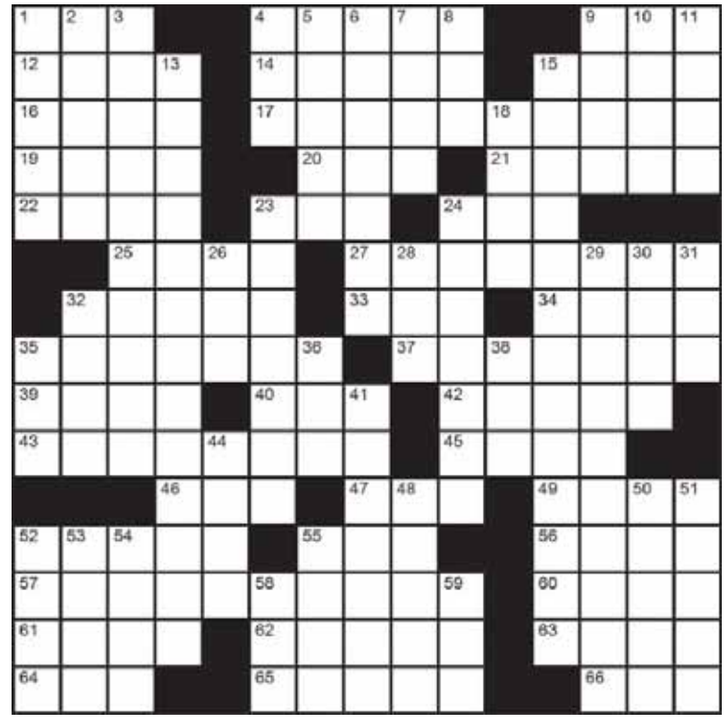
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Puny planes posting
4. Bing Crosby's Christmas medley duettist David
9. Li'l hairstyles
12. Cartography subj.
14. 'Pine' is a popular one at Christmas
15. Hourly pay
16. Tech sch. grad
17. Sporty character voiced by Canadian actor Paul Kligman in "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer": 2 wds.
19. Roughly
20. Realty database, commonly
21. Beginning
22. Genuine
23. Comprehend
24. Towels holder
25. Houston ML-Ber, to fans
27. "Up on the __ __": Christmas tune that goes "Down through the chimney with lots of toys..."
32. Burglar
33. Lieutenant Tasha __ ("Star Trek: The Next Generation" role)
34. Ploy
35. "Gimme Little Sign": 1967 hit for __ Wood
37. Ritzy spice
39. Tennis great Bjorn
40. Egg mass
42. Clods
43. Treats left for Santa
45. Lounge around
46. Ctrl, Shift, __
47. Long river in Scotland
49. Jeans tops
52. "Let __ Be Peace on Earth"
55. __ Mahal
56. Stagnate
57. "We Three Kings of Orient Are"... "Field and fountain, moor and mountain / Following __ __."
60. Change position
61. Seal herds
62. Buy
63. By any chance
64. Photo __ (PR events)
65. Groups, briefly
66. Cousin of -ette

DOWN
1. Spew
2. Opera voice
3. People like Yukon Cornelius when travelling: 2 wds.
4. Grad letters
5. "_ __, All Ye Faithful"
6. Rich
7. Bus. name abbreviations
8. Ordinal suffix
9. Beaver creations
10. S-shaped moulding
11. Cobblestone
13. Holiday things sent/received: 2 wds.
15. "It's the Most __ __ of the Year": Classic tune on #48-Down
18. Dove murmurs
23. "Don't hold back!": 3 wds.
24. In a country style
26. Soak flax
28. '_' __ in Ornament
29. Bird in "The Twelve Days of Christmas": 2 wds.
30. Bears, in Barcelona
31. Write
32. Deanna __ (Counselor on "Star Trek: The Next Generation")
35. 'Start With Trust' is this org.'s slogan
36. "__ so fast!"
38. __ Fighters (Rock band)
41. Mansion settings
44. Peter Fonda title role
48. Current festive album produced by Bob Rock: '_ __ Arden Christmas'
50. North Pole toyshop workers
51. Soothsayers
52. 'Winter' as Wnter
53. Basketball net
54. Halts
55. Tea stirrers [abbr.]
58. Cape Town's home [acronym]
59. Li'l streets

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
You are on your way up in the world. The Sun's move into the career area of your chart means if you have a plan and if you make the effort there is nothing you cannot accomplish.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
The Sun's change of signs endows you with almost limitless confidence. But try not to take life too seriously. Make a point of seeing the funny side of everything that happens.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
The week will bring to light something you have been trying to hide from yourself. If you want to get over it now is the time to face up to your demons. They are not as terrifying as you imagine.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Get over any embarrassment you might feel at revealing your innermost feelings. Even if you are the kind of Cancerian who keeps your emotions in check you will want to share what is in your heart.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Anything you begin will have the stamp of success on it, so long as you start slowly and don't take silly risks. You have big ambitions but you still need to take care of your health.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
The Sun moves into the most dynamic area of your chart today, making this one of the best times of the year for getting things done. Have a plan and pace yourself.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
As from today you will feel a lot more positive about what kind of person you are and what kind of things you should be doing in your life. If you feel yourself pulled in a new direction don't let others talk you out of it.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You'll let others know what you think and feel today. However, that does not mean you should tell them everything about yourself. It could give rivals information to use against you.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
The efforts and sacrifices you've made recently have not been in vain, and your financial situation will improve by the end of the week. Don't rely on promises — get cash in hand.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
If you focus your energy in a single direction you'll achieve something amazing. There can be no more doubts or wondering if you are making the right moves. Choose a path.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You're about to get yet another opportunity to overcome a fear and you must take it. Stop worrying about life and start living it and enjoying it. There are so many good things in the world.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Someone you meet on your travels will become a good friend and also a partner who can assist with the big projects you've got lined up. Your needs and theirs are closely related.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

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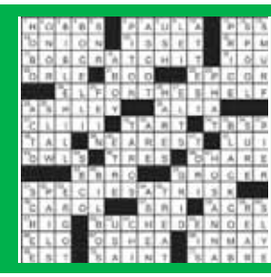

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